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ABSTRACT

The Vocational Education Amendments of 1976 mandate that sex bias and sex stereotyping be eliminated from all vocational education programs. In business and office occupations programs, the problems have been centered around increasing the number of male students in the program, encouraging women to move into management positions and other upper level supervisory jobs, and using sex-fair language in business communications. In response to the Amendments, the state of Delaware developed five sex equity modules designed to (1) focus on issues which are related to specific clusters of career options as defined in Delaware's competency-based, goal-oriented business and office occupations curriculum; (2) provide information and materials for one to three days of activities; and (3) focus the student's attention on those sex equity concerns which will affect her/his experiences as a student in the classroom, on-the-job, and in making career decisions. This module focuses on eliminating sex stereotyping in clerical and related occupations (typist, records supervisor, file assistant, inventory assistant, shipping/receiving assistant, telephone operator, messenger, receptionist). Instructional activities contained in the module include pre- and post-inventory of sex-biased perceptions, the story of twins Jim and Julie, inequities in salaries and the words used in job descriptions, an article on male secretaries, a slide-tape presentation, and qualifications for employment. (KC)

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CLERICAL AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS MODULE

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PREFACE

The Vocational Education Amendments of 1976 mandate that sex bias and stereotyping be eliminated from all vocational education programs.

The amendments set aside $50,000 of each state's Federal vocational funds for this purpose and mandate that each state employ an individual full time to work on eliminating sex bias and stereotyping from vocational programs.

Each program area has special problems which must be addressed in order to achieve sex equity. In business and office occupations programs, the problems have been centered around increasing the number of male students in the program, encouraging women to move into management positions and other upper level supervisory jobs, and using sex-fair language in business communications.

The sex equity modules are designed to:

1. focus on issues which are related to specific clusters of career options as defined in Delaware's competency-based goal oriented business and office occupations curriculum;

2. provide information and materials for one to three days of activities; and

3. focus the student's attention on those sex equity concerns which will affect her/his experiences as a student in the classroom, on-the-job, and career decisions.

Instruction in business and office occupations programs should:

1. afford both male and female students opportunities to pursue a number of career options;

2. include a sex-fair curriculum; and

3. provide students with cooperative work experiences without regard to the sex of the student.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE CLUSTER 1

1. Description of Programs 1
2. Vocational Business Model 1
3. Sub-Clusters 2
4. Clerical Occupations (USOE 14.0300, 14.0400, 14.0900). 2

II. CLERICAL AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS - PERFORMANCE AND OBJECTIVES 7

1. Focuses 7
2. Activities 7
3. Performance Objectives 8

III. INTRODUCTION TO CLERICAL MODULE 8

1. Overview of Instructional Activities 9

Activity (a). 10
Activity (b). 12
Activity (c). 15
Activity (d). 17
Activity (e) (Slide-Tape Presentation)
Activity (f). 23

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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE CLUSTER

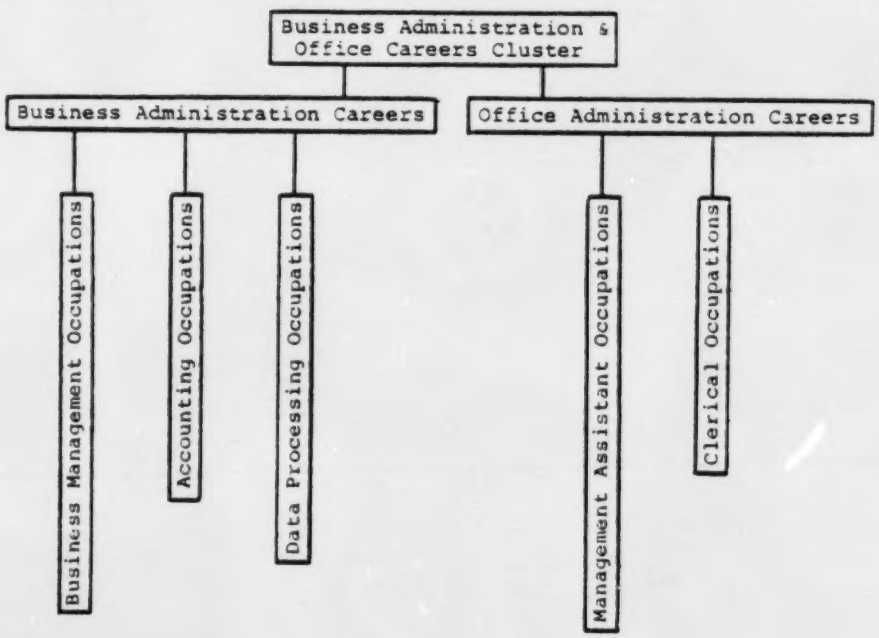
1. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS

Business education represents a broad and diverse discipline that is included in a variety of educational delivery systems--elementary, secondary, and post-secondary schools. The dual purpose of this field of study is to educate individuals about business and to provide a continuous program of planned learning experiences designed to equip individuals with the technical skills necessary for competing successfully for employment in the business community.

Business education includes competency-based programs in office occupations, business teaching, business administration, and economic understandings. Specifically, the Business Administration and Office Careers Cluster provides career information and training that helps students relate their interests, needs, and abilities to occupational opportunities identified in five areas of concentration: business management, accounting, data processing, clerical, and management-assistant clusters. These five areas interrelate with each function providing opportunities for advancement beginning with entry-level jobs for the secondary-school graduate. However, many positions do require at least two years of technical post-secondary preparation.

2. VOCATIONAL BUSINESS MODEL

It is the function of this cluster to provide students with the competencies that will enable individuals to obtain appropriate jobs in their chosen business field--and to advance within an occupational grouping. In Delaware, the vocational business model consists of five sub-clusters which are illustrated below:



3. SUB-CLUSTERS

The specific jobs for which students are prepared in the sub-clusters are indicated on Figure 3 of this guide. Each specific job has been identified/verified via survey of the business community through out the Delaware region.

4. CLERICAL OCCUPATIONS (USOE 14.0300, 14.0400, 14.0900)

(a) Office Administration Careers

The office administration program is divided into two sub-clusters which emphasize administrative-support functions including generating, classifying, disseminating, and storage/retrieving information. A general overview, specific job description, and employment outlook for each sub-cluster are provided below. Programmed learning guides assist students through competency-based modules which may result in employment according to job titles identified.

(b) Clerical Occupations

Successful business operations require extensive communication and recordkeeping activities to be performed by clerical workers. This program is designed to give the student technical and human relation skills, knowledge of business procedures, a professional work attitude, and an understanding of the communication process in an office. The occupations in the clerical area for both men and women include typist, file clerk, stock clerk, mail clerk, reprographics operator, messenger, shipping/receiving assistant, records supervisor, recpetionist, general office assistant, calculating/adding machine operator, magnetic tape operator, correspondence, application forms, etc.

For entry-level employment, competencies should be developed in keyboarding, filing, business machines, mail-handling procedures, recordkeeping, duplicating, communication techniques, payroll, and the preparation of business forms. While specific clerical duties vary according to the size and scope of the office, in general there is need for the following personal qualities: attention to detail, neatness, and accuracy, ability to follow oral and written instructions; ability to work well with others; patience, good judgment, and initiative.

(c) Job Descriptions

Opportunities exist for individuals with all levels of ability because of the variety of clerical jobs in existence. For some, the entry-level clerical position may

FIGURE 3

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND OFFICE CAREERS CLUSTER

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION CAREERS

MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT OCCUPATIONS

[a]U.S.O.E.	[b]D.O.T.	POSITIONS
14.0701	201.162-010	Executive Secretary
14.0702	201.162-030	Secretary
14.0702	210.362-010	Legal Secretary
14.0702	210.362-014	Medical Secretary
14.0702	201.362-014	Technical Secretary
14.0703	202.362-014	Stenographer
14.0799	203.137-010	Correspondence Secretary (Word Processing Supervisor)

CLERICAL OCCUPATIONS

[a]U.S.O.E.	[b]D.O.T.	POSITIONS
14.0901	203.362-010	Assistant Typist
14.0902	203.582-022	Typist
14.0399	203.582-034	Magnetic Tape Operator
14.0499	203.582-058	Transcribing Machine Operator
14.0803	206.137-010	Records Supervisor
14.0302	206.362-010	File Assistant
14.0301	207.682-010	Repographics Operator
14.0402	209.367-018	Correspondence Assistant
14.0303	209.562-010	General Office Assistant
14.0403	209.587-026	Mail Assistant
14.0399	216.482-014	Calculating/Adding Machine Operator
14.0504	222.387-026	Inventory Assistant
14.0504	222.387-058	Stock Assistant
14.0503	222.387-050	Shipping/Receiving Assistant
14.0401	235.662-022	Telephone Operator
14.0406	237.367-038	Receptionist
14.0405	239.567-010	Office Helper (Messenger)

a This number refers to U. S. Office of Education Codes for business and office occupations.

b Dictionary of Occupational Title--1978 - This number refers to Department of Labor Codes for specific jobs within an occupational grouping.

be a stepping-stone to more responsible jobs; for others, the clerical field may offer a lifetime career. The higher the personal and educational qualifications of an applicant, the greater the possibility of obtaining a challenging and well-paying clerical position.

(1) Assistant Typist (D.O.T. 203.362-010)

Compiles data and operates typewriter in performance of routine clerical duties to maintain business records and reports; types reports, business correspondence, application forms, etc.

(2) Typist (D.O.T. 203.582-022)

Types letters, reports, stencils, forms, addresses, or other straight-copy material from rough draft or corrected copy; may verify total report forms, requisitions, or bills.

(3) Magnetic-Tape Operator (D.O.T. 203.582-034)

Operates magnetic-tape typewriter and tape console to produce master tape for automatic reproduction.

(4) Transcribing Machine Operator (D.O.T. 203.582-058)

Operates typewriter to transcribe letters, reports, or other recorded data heard through earphones of transcribing (voice reproducing) machine.

(5) Records Supervisor (D.O.T. 206.137-010)

Supervises and coordinates activities of workers engaged in maintaining central records files; directs and assists workers in searching files to retrieve lost or missing records, utilizing knowledge of common filing errors; routes incorrectly pulled files to workers for filing; directs and assists workers in periodic disposal of obsolete files, according to company policy and legal requirements; may recommend changes in work procedures to improve filing-system efficiency.

(6) File Assistant (D.O.T. 206.362-010)

Files correspondence, cards, invoices, receipts, and other records in alphabetical or numerical order, or according to subject matter, phonetic spelling, or other systems; reads incoming material and sorts according to filing system; places material in file cabinet, drawers, or cases; locates and

removes material from files when requested; keeps records of materials removed, stamps material received, and traces missing files.

(7) Reprographics Operator (D.O.T. 207.682-010) (Duplicating Machine Operator)

Operates machine to reproduce data to provide multiple copies, uses offset, photocopy, photographic, mimeographic, and liquid processes.

(8) Correspondence Assistant (D.O.T. 209.367-018)

Reads and routes incoming correspondence to individual or department concerned.

(9) General Office Assistant (D.O.T. 209.562-010)

Performs any combination of the following clerical tasks; writes or types bills, statements, receipts, checks, or other documents; copies information from one record to another; proofreads records or forms; counts, weighs, or measures materials; sorts and files records; receives money from customers and deposits money in bank; addresses envelopes; answers telephone; conveys messages; runs errands; stamps, sorts, and distributes mail; stamps or numbers forms; copies documents; uses duplicating equipment.

(10) Mail Assistant (D.O.T. 209.587-026)

Sorts incoming mail for distribution and dispatches outgoing mail; opens envelopes; readdresses undeliverable mail; may distribute and collect mail.

(11) Calculating/Adding Machine Operator (D.O.T. 216.482-014)

Computes and records statistical, accounting, and other numerical data, using knowledge of arithmetic and electrically powered machine.

(12) Stock Assistant (D.O.T. 222.387-058)

Receives, stores, and issues equipment, material, supplies, merchandise, foodstuffs, or tools, and compiles stock records in stockroom, warehouse, or storage yard; counts, sorts, or weighs incoming articles to verify receipt of items on requisitions or invoices; examines stock to verify conformance to specifications.

(13) Inventory Assistant (D.O.T. 222.387-026)

Compiles records of amount, kind and value of merchandise, material or stock on hand in business; compares inventories taken by other workers with office records; verifies clerical computations against physical count of stock and adjusts errors in computations on count; prepares reports of inventory balance, prices, and costs.

(14) Shipping/Receiving Assistant (D.O.T. 222.387-050)

Verifies and keeps records on incoming and outgoing shipments and prepares items for shipment; compares identifying information and counts, weighs, or measures items of incoming and outgoing shipments to verify against bills of lading, invoices, orders, or other records; determines method of shipment, utilizing knowledge of shipping procedures, routes, and rates.

(15) Telephone Operator (D.O.T. 235.662-022)

Operates cord or cordless switchboard to relay incoming, outgoing, and inter-office calls; may supply information to callers and record messages; may keep record of calls placed and toll charges; may operate system of bells or buzzers to notify individuals to answer the incoming call.

(16) Receptionist (D.O.T. 237.367-038)

Receives callers at establishment, determines nature of business, and directs callers to destination; obtains caller's name and arranges for appointments with person called upon; directs caller to destination and records name, time of call, nature of business, and person called upon; may make future appointments and answer inquiries.

(17) Office Helper (D.O.T. 239.567-010)
(Messenger)

Performs any combination of the following duties in a business office of commercial or industrial establishment; delivers oral or written messages; collects and distributes paperwork; may specialize in delivering mail, messages, documents, and packages between departments of establishment.

(d) Employment Outlook

Clerical occupations is one of the largest occupational clusters in the United States. It provides thousands of new job opportunities yearly. The job market should be favorable for qualified clerical workers during the coming years.

The clerical field provides excellent employment opportunities for men and women. While many young persons may be discouraged by the non-competitive entry-level salaries, the potential does exist for promotion to more rewarding, higher paying jobs. Salaries in clerical occupations vary with the requirements and the demands of the job.

Despite computer advancement there is every indication that the need for clerical workers will continue to rise through the 1980's. The rapid growth of service industries (such as financial, insurance, and real estate) has boosted the demand for clerical workers.

II. CLERICAL AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS - PERFORMANCE AND OBJECTIVES

1. FOCUSES

(a) Job responsibilities and work roles of men and women.

(b) General attitudes about men and clerical work.

(c) Career ladders - how to move up in a company and plan for advancement.

2. ACTIVITIES

(a) Pre-inventory.

(b) Jim and Julie - job responsibilities of men and women.

(c) Inequities in salaries and the words used in job descriptions.

(d) Discuss an article on men as secretaries.

(e) Slide-tape presentation.

(f) Qualifications for Employment

(g) Post-inventory

3. PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES (Competencies)

(a) Given an opportunity to discuss past work roles of men and women, the student will list two reasons why men are not readily accepted in clerical jobs.

(b) Given the opportunity to read and discuss the article on men as secretaries, the student will list two advantages and two disadvantages stated by the men interviewed in the article.

(c) Given an opportunity to discuss career advancement, the student will list three things that he/she would need to do if he/she wanted to advance from his/her present job.

III. INTRODUCTION TO CLERICAL MODULE

A man attempting to do "women's work" has been an object of ridicule since the work of the sexes was first divided. Men in the office are generally depicted as creative, forceful "doers" except when they are faced with the detail work that is seen as the secretary/clerical worker's province, a real injustice to competent male secretaries/clerical worker. Ten years ago, newspaper advertisements for clerical workers appeared exclusively under the heading "Help Wanted--Female."

One company that is making headway in finding and hiring male clerical workers is the country's largest utility, American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T). Acting in response to continuing government pressure, the utility has filed a voluntary consent decree with the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). This means that AT&T has pledged to recruit male clerical workers as part of an overall plan to place both men and women in nontraditional jobs. So, along with the highly publicized women on the telephone poles, the company has quietly set a target that 25 percent of its clerical staff will be male by 1980. According to Frank Peters, Administrator of AT&T's equal opportunity program, the company has already managed to boost entry-level clerical jobs to 12.7 percent male, compared to some 4.9 percent in 1972.

This module is designed to give students the opportunity to consider clerical positions as career options for men as well as women. Activities will deal with the following issues concerning sex equity in clerical and related occupations:

(a) Job title terminology.

(b) General attitudes.

(c) Career ladders - how to move up in a company and plan for advancement.

1. OVERVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The following have been selected to complete the module. Please note several of the activities need duplicating prior to use.

(a) Pre-inventory

Sex biased perceptions can inhibit students of both sexes in the kinds of career options they will consider. The purpose of this activity is to have the student critically examine their attitudes about jobs specifically labeled as jobs for a particular sex.

(b) Jim and Julie

Have students read the story of "Jim and Julie" aloud in class and answer questions on the reverse side about the story. Discuss responses and reason for their choices.

(c) Inequities in salaries and the words used in job descriptions.

Have students cross out and substitute words or salaries that might indicate any kind of inequality. After completing the sheet, discuss the changes the students should have observed and corrected.

(d) Discuss an article on men as secretaries.

Read and discuss article "Surprise - He's a secretary".

(e) Slide-tape presentation.

(f) Qualifications for Employment

Qualifications for Employment are designed to expose students to the many different jobs available in clerical occupations and to show that the qualifications for employment are not determined by sex.

(g) Post-inventory

Use activity sheet (a) again as a post-inventory to re-examine attitudes about job concepts which are labeled for one sex. Compare responses in a class or group discussion.

ACTIVITY (a)

Pre-inventory
Post-inventory

PERCEPTIONS ON SEX EQUITY ISSUES

CIRCLE EITHER "SUPPORT" OR "REJECT"

1.	Women who work are taking jobs away from men.	SUPPORT	REJECT
2.	Most women tend to lose their femininity when they perform jobs usually executed by men.	SUPPORT	REJECT
3.	Less serious academic and career aims for girls should be understood and accepted by teachers working with girls.	SUPPORT	REJECT
4.	Boys need to be educated so that they will be more cognizant of the broader role of today's women.	SUPPORT	REJECT
5.	Classroom activities are not assigned on the basis of sex.	SUPPORT	REJECT
6.	Teachers have the same classroom expectations for girls and boys.	SUPPORT	REJECT
7.	Students are encouraged to examine their vocational preferences other than by traditional role expectations based on sex.	SUPPORT	REJECT
8.	Males should be given first preference, when enrollment in industrial and technical classes is limited.	SUPPORT	REJECT
9.	Women should be allowed to work in heavy industry.	SUPPORT	REJECT
10.	If women are to work in heavy industry, there should be special restrictions on working hours and conditions.	SUPPORT	REJECT
11.	Girls as well as boys need to prepare themselves for careers.	SUPPORT	REJECT
12.	Men make better bosses than women.	SUPPORT	REJECT

13.	Most boys would laugh at a boy who enrolled in shorthand.	SUPPORT	REJECT
14.	Most boys would laugh at a boy who wanted to become a receptionist.	SUPPORT	REJECT
15.	Most men would marry a woman even though she works as a truck driver.	SUPPORT	REJECT
16.	A woman can have a career while raising a family.	SUPPORT	REJECT
17.	The language and atmosphere in a shop course are probably not proper for having a girl enrolled.	SUPPORT	REJECT
18.	Other students would consider a boy a sissy if he wanted to become a telephone operator.	SUPPORT	REJECT
19.	Each student should have the right to the job preparation program of his or her choice.	SUPPORT	REJECT
20.	There are some jobs that only men should be hired for.	SUPPORT	REJECT
21.	A woman's main role is to be a good wife and mother.	SUPPORT	REJECT
22.	A woman can do any job (occupation) a man can do.	SUPPORT	REJECT

PERCEPTIONS OF SEX EQUITY IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST RESULTS
By: Anna M. Gorman, Project Director; Elaine Jorgenson, Associate Project Director; and Chester Darcy, Project Assistant. Oklahoma State University, Department of Home Economics, Division of Home Economics, Stillwater, OK 74074 (April, 1979)

ACTIVITY (b)

JIM AND JULIE*

Read the following story about a set of twins. After the story are some questions about the twins. Please answer the questions on the next page. There are no right or wrong answers.

Jim and Julie are twins. This is a story about a day in their lives. Jim and Julie are called to get up for school. One twin gets up right away and gets dressed. The other twin is called two more times and then gets out of bed. One twin makes the bed. Both twins are now in the kitchen. One twin gets the cereal out for breakfast. The twins eat breakfast and one helps clear the table. One twin went to brush his or her teeth. One twin missed the bus and rode a bike to school. One twin bought lunch tickets and took some of them to the other twin. It was time for school to start. One twin was wandering around the room until reminded to sit down. The first thing they did was have a spelling test. One twin spelled all the words right. The other twin didn't. Next the class went to music. One twin didn't like music and was slow to line up. When they got back from music, it was time for math. Both twins liked math, but one got better grades. Next, the twins had social studies. They were studying Africa. Their parents had visited several countries and one of the twins had brought an African mask to show the class. Just before lunch, one of the twins noticed that the fish in the aquarium hadn't been fed and fed them. The class was dismissed for lunch and one twin ran down the hall to the cafeteria. After lunch the class went out for recess. One of the twins talked to friends during recess. One twin ripped a coat during recess. After recess the class had a story. One twin was drawing during the story. Next was science. One of the twins had prepared a science experiment to show the class. Then the class had a test. One of the twins hadn't studied and copied the answers from a friend's paper. Reading was next and one twin had an overdue book to return to the library. After reading the twins went to P.E. with their class. One twin was late getting to P.E. It was time to go home now and both twins got on the bus. They both decided to go over to friends' houses to play after school. One twin called home to say where they were. When they got home, one of the twins started the math homework. Before dinner, the twins emptied the garbage, set the table, picked up toys in the family room, and helped with dinner. During dinner, one twin put both elbows on the table. After dinner one twin was supposed to wash dishes while the other dried. One twin had to be called back to the kitchen from watching T.V. After the dishes were done, the twins went out to play. They played baseball with other kids in the neighborhood. One twin hit the ball and broke a window. The twins went and told the people the window would be paid for. The twin who broke the window was afraid of getting in trouble and didn't have money to pay

for the window so the twin took the money from their mother's purse. The twins watched T.V. until it was time to go to bed. When they were told to go to bed, one of the twins argued to stay up later.

* From: "Works in a box: goodies by teachers for teachers" Portland, Oregon.

ACTIVITY (b)
(Cont'd)

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TWINS

Directions: Circle the name of the twin you think did the thing mentioned in each question.

1.	Who got up right away?	Jim	Julie
2.	Who made the bed?	Jim	Julie
3.	Who got the cereal out?	Jim	Julie
4.	Who helped clear the table?	Jim	Julie
5.	Who brushed his/her teeth?	Jim	Julie
6.	Who missed the bus?	Jim	Julie
7.	Who bought lunch tickets?	Jim	Julie
8.	Who wandered around the room?	Jim	Julie
9.	Who spelled the words right?	Jim	Julie
10.	Who didn't like music?	Jim	Julie
11.	Who got better math grades?	Jim	Julie
12.	Who brought the African mask?	Jim	Julie
13.	Who fed the fish?	Jim	Julie
14.	Who ran down the hall?	Jim	Julie
15.	Who talked to friends on recess?	Jim	Julie
16.	Who ripped the coat?	Jim	Julie
17.	Who drew during the story?	Jim	Julie
18.	Who had the science experiment?	Jim	Julie
19.	Who copied answers in science?	Jim	Julie
20.	Who had an overdue book?	Jim	Julie
21.	Who was late for P.E.?	Jim	Julie
22.	Who called home?	Jim	Julie
23.	Who started the math homework?	Jim	Julie
24.	Who emptied the garbage?	Jim	Julie
25.	Who set the table?	Jim	Julie
26.	Who picked up toys?	Jim	Julie
27.	Who helped with dinner?	Jim	Julie
28.	Who put his/her elbows on the table?	Jim	Julie
29.	Who was watching T.V.?	Jim	Julie
30.	Who washed the dishes?	Jim	Julie
31.	Who broke the window?	Jim	Julie
32.	Who took the money?	Jim	Julie
33.	Who argued to stay up later?	Jim	Julie

Look again at your answers. Do you see any kind of pattern?

How would you describe Julie? Jim?

ACTIVITY (c)

Employees and payroll data are given for T & H Insurance Company.

Title	Name	Soc. Sec. Number	Marital Status	Exemptions	Salary
Underwriter/Adjuster	Michael Slavin	301-62-1980	M	5	$1400/mo.
Insurance Salesman	Jeffrey Barnes	200-41-5655	M	3	$1000/mo.
Insurance Salesman	Renee Thompson	286-01-5786	S	1	$ 800/mo.
Secretary	Lorraine Steven	581-98-6213	S	1	$ 600/mo.
Bookkeeper	Linda James	422-87-3867	M	1	$ 600/mo.
Receptionist	George Adams	169-00-8377	M	0	$2.85/hr.

ACTIVITY (c)

KEY

Employees and payroll data are given for T & H Insurance Company.

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Underwriter/Adjuster	Michael Slavin	301-62-1980	M	5	$1400/mo.
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Insurance Salesperson	Renee Thompson	286-01-5786	S	1	$1000/mo.
Administrative Asst.	Lorraine Steven	581-98-6213	S	1	$ 600/mo.
Bookkeeper	Linda James	422-87-3867	M	1	$ 600/mo.
Clerical Aide	George Adams	865-13-4309	S	1	$2.85/hr.

Surprise! He's A Secretary

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1/22/80 Donna Lee Tomma Editor
DATE SIGNATURE & TITLE

Art Sellevold (seated at right, with boss Jack Curran) is one of a growing group of men who've bucked tradition to pursue secretarial careers.

by Laura Terrone

A man attempting to do "women's work" has been an object of ridicule since the work of the sexes was first divided. (After the Fall, Adam delved [farmed] and Eve span [wove clothing]. Imagine Eve wielding a crude hoe and Adam counting stitches!)

The classic example of this genre is a man—actor Fred MacMurray comes to mind—in a frilly apron, holding a feather duster and wearing a silly look on his face. In the background, children and dogs howl, dinner burns, and the vacuum cleaner tears up the living room. The man is stricken, trying hard to cope, but obviously helpless to manage the housewifely chores that Donna Reed carries off with dispatch. Audiences love it.

Change the scenery to the office and the joke merely expands to include secretarial "women's work." Men in the office are generally depicted as creative, forceful "doers," except when they are faced with the detail work that is seen as the secretary's province. So here's Fred MacMurray again—same silly look, but this time he's holding a steno pad as telephones ring incessantly, the duplicating machine runs amuck, and the office routine falls apart, lacking the touch of, say, Ann Sothern.

"A scene like that is great theater," grins **Kirby Lewellen,** "but it does a real injustice to competent male secretaries." Kirby is qualified to judge on both counts, since he is by profession both an actor and a secretary. In the second capacity, he administers the front office of Playwrights' Horizons, an off-Broadway theater company in New York City. Here he answers telephones, takes dictation from a boss (female), types programs, and keeps track of the dozens of stagehands, actors, and technicians who make up the repertory company. As a male secretary, he considers himself in the vanguard of what he sees as a national trend toward the easing of sex-role stereotyping. Says Kirby: "The artificial barriers that separate men and women and the kind of work they can do are falling as fast and as flat as a pan of Fred MacMurray's muffins. . . ."

photo by Shelly Katz

The myth that men and women have somehow evolved in mysteriously different ways that enable members of one sex to excel in certain kinds of work, while leaving them to fail dismally in others, is being proven false every workday by growing legions of "nontraditionals": women who are business executives, cabbies, cops, sales reps, lawyers, military officers, and symphony conductors, and men who are nurses, teachers, homemakers, telephone operators, flight attendants —and secretaries.

Ten years ago, newspaper advertisements for secretaries appeared exclusively under the heading "Help Wanted—Female." As if that were not enough to warn off most men, a unique phraseology was adopted to drive the point home. *The New York Times* of October 16, 1966, carried an ad for a "brite-eyed lassie" to work in a "one-girl office" in the Empire State Building. Another ad, seeking a secretary for an advertising agency, exhorted applicants to "look like a model, act like a lady, think like a man, and work like a dog."

continued on next page

Pride is Kirby Lewellen talking to his boss, Jane Moss, and wearing his high school sweater decorated with Gregg Shorthand pins.

The only male secretary in Prudential's Newark headquarters is Edgardo Aggabao, shown taking dictation from his boss, attorney Phillip J. O'Brien, Jr. Edgardo came to the U.S. two years ago after working for nine years as a secretary in his native Philippines.

photo (top) by Barbara Groenteman
photo (bottom) courtesy The Prudential Insurance Company

continued from previous page

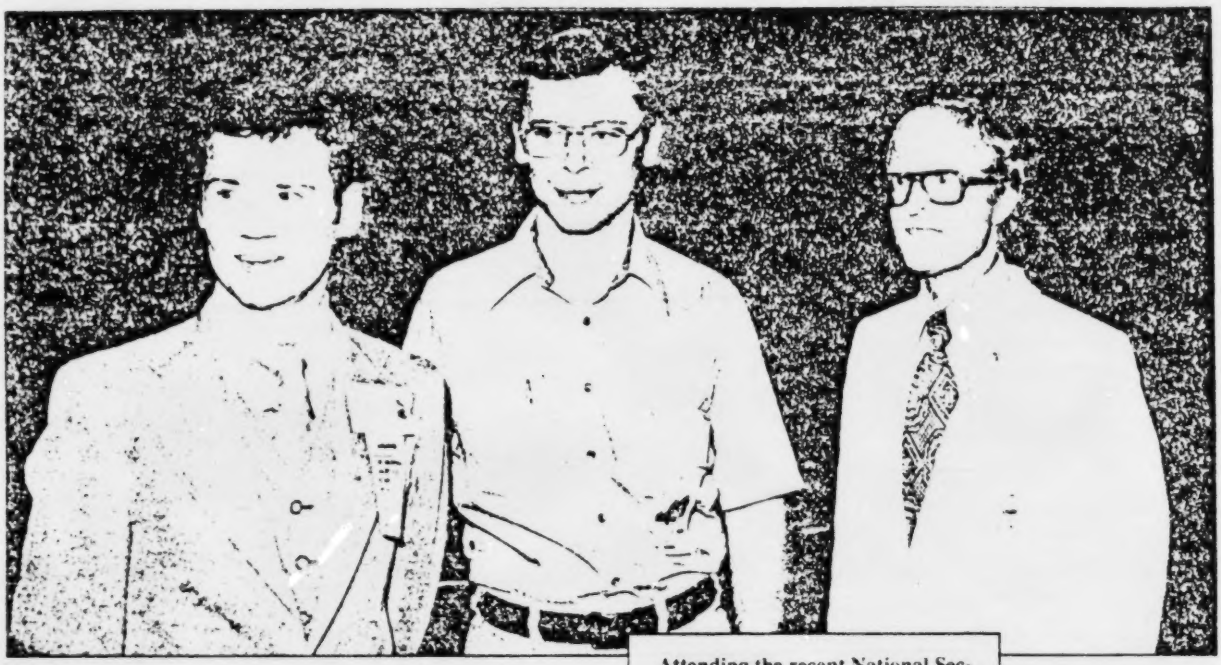
Today's want ads are by law free of such sexist, demeaning language, and the help-wanted columns are now labeled "Male/Female." And thousands of secretaries with names like Kirby and Ralph and Art and Greg and Richard and Ed and Les and Bill are taking advantage of the opportunity to nail down good secretarial jobs.

The Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that there are 33,000 male secretaries in the United States—fewer than one percent of the nation's 3,385,000 secretaries. The figure represents a significant increase in the number of men who have entered the profession since 1966 (the number has doubled). Some observers believe that the government's head count is too low and does not reflect a true picture of the male secretary population. They say that the number would be higher if more men who were secretaries acknowledged the fact instead of euphemistically describing themselves as "administrative assistants" or "office managers." Says Kirby Lewellen: "I don't think that the statistics have yet caught up to reality. In fact, they may just mirror society's prejudices. Many companies are still uncomfortable with the idea of men as secretaries. So when the call comes in from a government agency polling a company about the number of male secretaries it employs, the response is likely to be 'none,' even though there are any number of men there who answer telephones, open and sort mail, type letters, and so on. If these workers were women, they would instantly be identified as secretaries."

The taboo against male secretaries is ironic, since men have dominated the field throughout most of recorded history. Not until the beginning of the twentieth century and the invention of the typewriter did women begin to enter the business office in numbers. Before that, literate and educated men, not women, were the scribes and trusted right hands of such prominent individuals as Queen Cleopatra of Egypt and, in more recent times, Mary Queen of Scots, Thomas Jefferson, Adolph Hitler, Somerset Maugham, and Rex Reed. Men of the stature of Mark Twain, Woodrow Wilson, Henry Ford, Lyndon Johnson, and even Dustin Hoffman got their start as male secretaries in various fields ranging from show business to government to finance. The country's early growth industries—oil and railroads—were major employers of male secretaries as recently as the 1950s, because the atmosphere of the drilling fields was considered too rough for women, and overnight trips in specially outfitted executive railroad cars were considered too scandalous. With the introduction of modern business methods, these restrictions have eased to the extent that male secretaries have virtually disappeared from the railroad yards and petroleum fields, replaced by women. Today, Exxon Corporation, the nation's largest petroleum company, employs not a single male secretary.

Ralph A. Dowling of Denver, Colorado, has worked in a variety of industries since he started as a secretary in 1952. He is a student of the profession—a member of the National Secretaries Association (NSA), a holder of its coveted Certified Professional Secretary (CPS) rating, and the writer of numerous articles about male and female secretaries. In his youth, he read about the male secretaries who were confidants to presidents and kings and decided that he would like to follow their route to success. "I didn't have a college degree," says Ralph, "and I thought that being a secretary would give me access to the executive suite and allow me to work alongside educated, intelligent people."

The plan worked out well, for a time. Ralph was a secretary



Attending the recent National Secretaries Association (NSA) convention in Detroit were three unique members: male secretaries (left to right) Art Sellevold of Dallas, Les Cranbeal of Dayton, and Ralph Dowling of Denver.

in a Denver legal firm for 11 years and enjoyed his work very much. When the time came for a change of pace, Ralph quit his job without hesitation, reasoning that a secretary with his experience would have no trouble landing another job. He didn't think about prejudice against males in the secretarial field. "I had never run into it before," recalls Ralph. "But I did this time, and it came as a shock. For three months, I pounded pavements in search of a job and waited for the telephone to ring." Ralph had registered with five local employment agencies and says that he received no encouragement from any of them. When he tried to answer ads in the help-wanted section of the newspaper, he was informed with many a sidelong glance: "We are not looking for a man in that position."

"From the tone of their responses," says Ralph, "I realized the problem: many men were afraid to hire a male secretary. First, they were fearful that a male secretary would try to take over their jobs. But they were more afraid, I think, of the things their friends might say." Chief among these are comments such as: "Don't you like women?" and "What are you, a homosexual?"—questions that have no bearing at all on the work of a secretary but stem from the sexist stereotyping of female secretaries. Women in the office are perceived by immature male employers as surrogate wives who are supposed to provide emotional support in addition to their administrative assignments. "These men," notes Ralph, "insist on keeping a pretty, young girl around to feed their egos. All I can offer is a well-run office."

In the face of this kind of prejudice, says Ralph, a male secretary must "shop" carefully for an employer who is emotionally secure and will not be swayed by what uninformed people think. Finding that sort of individual can be a difficult task, so Ralph advises young men in secretarial training programs to maintain excellent grades and to sharpen skills to above-average levels. Says Ralph, who finally found a good job as secretary to the medical advisor of the Air Line Pilots Association, International: "Just as a female pilot must be a superb flyer to win the respect of her male colleagues, so must a male secretary be ready to prove that he is more than equal to the task of doing an efficient job as a secretary."

The U.S. Office of Education estimates that about six percent of the students now enrolled in secretarial training courses in the nation's public schools are males. A sampling of opinion of educators around the country indicates that the number of male typewriting and stenography students is increasing. When **Art Sellevold** was in high school, he wanted more than anything to become a secretary. "Actually," says Art, "my ambition had no label; I wanted to be a kind of 'information center,' where people would come to have questions answered and problems resolved. Unfortunately for me, in the office this job translates into 'secretary'—and in my high school in Minnesota, boys were definitely discouraged from training for that career."

So young Art took courses in bookkeeping that were considered more "appropriate" for young men and landed a job as an accountant. "I didn't really care for it, though," he recalls. "I still wanted to be a secretary." After five unhappy years, Art finally decided to buck tradition and pursue his original goal. He enrolled in the Executive Secretarial School in Dallas, Texas, where he had moved. There he met Jan Rabb, the dean of the school. Ms. Rabb had had little experience in training young men for secretarial careers, and she was at first skeptical of Art's aspirations. She was soon won over, though, by Art's enthusiasm. Says Ms. Rabb: "He set the standard for

continued on next page

Before promotion to his current junior executive position, Ed Alston, 24, worked as secretary to Maxine Cade of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in Washington, D.C.

continued from previous page

the school, and I urged all the girls to follow his example. They liked him very much, too, because he didn't show off and was always ready to help someone else out. Everyone agreed that he was a born secretary."

Armed with excellent skills (he types 85 words a minute and takes shorthand at 140-160 wam), Art set out after graduation to conquer the world. He circumvented the problem of discrimination in hiring by taking out a situation-wanted ad in *The Wall Street Journal*, theorizing that individuals and firms that were prejudiced against male secretaries would simply not answer the ad. "The strategy worked very well," notes Art. "I received many inquiries and suffered no embarrassment."

After numerous interviews—including trips to San Antonio and Houston that were paid for by the companies that wanted to hire him—Art accepted a job as secretary to a private investor in Dallas. The job didn't work out, though. "Believe it or not," says Art, "the man who hired me considered a male secretary as some kind of a status symbol. I found myself learning nothing in my job. I was spending all my time doing the male equivalent of filing my nails when I really wanted to work." The story does have a happy ending, however. Art eventually switched jobs and this time connected with his current employer, International Business Machines Corp. (IBM). Art is administrative secretary to a total of nine people and is in charge of scheduling classes for visiting businesspeople who are learning how to operate IBM's newest office equipment. Sitting in his ultramodern office surrounded by people and sleek machinery, Art appears finally to have gotten his wish. He is, indeed, the information center he always wanted to be.

Art Sellevold is lucky to be associated with a company like IBM that enjoys a fine reputation for employing both women and men (as well as members of various minority groups) in job categories that they could not hope to enter in other, less progressive, companies. In 1976, IBM employed 15,088 women in clerical positions. Another 10,980 clerical jobs were held by men during the same year. While these 26,000-plus jobs include the entire IBM clerical force, not just secretaries, the figures show that IBM is doing an effective job of recruiting men for nontraditional jobs. (A new educational film produced by IBM, for instance, features a male secretary explaining the workings of his new typewriting equipment to his female boss.)

In comparison, other large companies in the U.S. are employing not nearly as many male secretaries. As mentioned previously, the nation's largest industrial corporation, Exxon, has no male secretaries in either its New York City or Houston offices, although a spokesperson concedes that the company often hires men for temporary work as typists, receptionists, and so on. Likewise, the transportation company rated largest in the country by *Fortune* magazine, Trans World Airlines, Inc., reports only one male out of 492 secretaries in its New York City home office. Prudential Insurance Company of America, the nation's largest insurance company, employs just one male secretary in its giant Newark, New Jersey, headquarters. Sears Roebuck and Co., the nation's largest retailing establishment with its home office in Chicago, Illinois, employs over 416,000 people in sales, executive, and clerical positions; fewer than 50 of these employees are male secretaries. And Bankamerica Corporation of San Francisco, the country's largest banking institution, employs a total of 64 male secretaries—two percent of its 3,695 secretaries. All these companies state that they would be more than willing to employ more male secretaries if only the men would present themselves for employment.*

One company that *is* making headway in finding and hiring male secretaries is the country's largest utility, American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T). Acting in response to continuing government pressure, the utility has filed a voluntary consent decree with the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). This means that AT&T has pledged to recruit male secretaries as part of an overall plan to place both men and women in nontraditional jobs. So, along with the highly publicized women on the telephone poles, the company has quietly set a target that 25 percent of its clerical staff will be male by 1980. According to Frank Peters, administrator of AT&T's equal opportunity program, the company has already managed to boost entry-level clerical jobs to 12.7 percent male, compared to some 4.9 percent in 1972. Mr. Peters sees public acceptance as the largest roadblock in recruiting male secretaries: "We have no trouble getting our supervisors here at AT&T to accept male secretaries. The hardest part of our job is convincing the parents of high school boys to allow these young men to take secretarial courses and accept clerical jobs. I've had parents tell me that they'd rather see their sons pumping gas for a living than doing 'women's work.' They fail to see that our clerical jobs can and do lead to advancement within the company."

Apparently, parental opinions such as this are not shared by the younger generation. AT&T secretary **Greg Russell**, who

photo by Vincent Graas

**Under the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, employers are prohibited from discriminating in hiring because of sex.*

works for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company in Little Rock, Arkansas, says that neither he nor any of his friends rate their masculinity or femininity according to the jobs they hold. Says Greg: "I didn't set out to be a secretary. But when Southwestern Bell offered me a secretarial job, I decided to take it. I judged it to be good, steady work. And it provides me with a great deal of self-fulfillment. I know, too, that I have an excellent chance to be promoted within the company if I do my job well."

Richard Prowell, who works at AT&T headquarters in New York City, echoes Greg's self-confidence as a man in the secretarial profession. Richard took secretarial courses in college and he learned early how to counteract prejudice: "As the only man in my typing and shorthand classes, I had to reach detente with the women or I'd have been ostracized." Often a judicious retreat was in order. Richard recalls with amusement one particular teacher who liked to present one lecture a term on the advisability of wearing corsets. "Naturally," he says, "she couldn't talk about corsets in my presence." She fretted about it all semester, but because Richard was never absent, she couldn't do a thing. "Finally, I just decided to cut class one day so that she could give her talk in peace. The women in the class thought it was very funny, because none of them would have thought of wearing a corset anyway."

Straightening out problems with women coworkers in the working world is not always that easy, according to Richard. He is aware that female secretaries can be distrustful of a male counterpart: "Some are worried that you won't do the job and they will have to take up the slack. Others fear that since you are a man, your status is automatically higher, and they'd just as soon not compete with you for promotions." Richard says that the best way for a male secretary to handle a tense working situation is to do his own job very well, cooperate with everyone, and show that he is working with, not against, his coworkers. "Eventually," he says, "their doubts disperse."

Like Richard, who hails from Kansas, many male secretaries find it necessary to leave their home towns to find work, because prejudice is less likely to be encountered in larger cities. One of the best places for a male secretary to consider relocating is Washington, D.C. The various offices of the Federal government located in the nation's capital were among the first to employ large numbers of men in clerical capacities. This situation came about partly because of equal employment drives and partly because of a constant need for good secretaries—male and female—to staff the offices of the Federal bureaucracy. Around the same time that government was beginning to realize that all secretaries didn't have to be women, a young man arrived in Washington, D.C., via the commuter train from Baltimore, Maryland. **Edward Alston,** a graduate of Strayer College, was looking for a job, and he found one at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), a government agency that handles thousands of discrimination charges brought by individuals against companies all over the country. Ed started in the agency as a clerk/stenographer. He says: "Many young men I know are unwilling to start their careers at the bottom of the ladder. But I felt that as a secretary, I could learn the mechanics of the agency—how a complaint is filed and how a case progresses from the time it is accepted until it is resolved. It's a very good training ground for men and women who want to advance," concludes Ed.

As a result of his efforts as a secretary, Ed has recently been promoted to equal employment assistant, a nonsecretarial job

continued on page 32

Formerly copy editor of a Little Rock daily newspaper, Greg Russell, 26, now cheerfully minds files for the telephone company.

Richard Prowell, 29, was once the only man in his typing class. Today he practices skills on the job at AT&T's New York office.

photos courtesy American Telephone and Telegraph Company

He's A Secretary

continued from page 9

Bill Meyers once toiled in a Pittsburgh steel mill but says he much prefers his life as a secretary in New York City.

that will eventually lead to a position as a departmental investigator working on discrimination cases involving blacks, women, and other minorities, including male secretaries.

Ed's experience is not very different from that of many other male secretaries. The men tend to be promoted quickly upon entering a company, sometimes unfairly, and often against their wishes. A common complaint of the professional male secretary is that management is forever pushing him into a supervisory role, even if he has stated a preference for secretarial work.

"It's as if management were implying that being a secretary couldn't possibly be 'enough' for a man." So says **Les Cranbeal** who, as an administrative assistant with a Dayton, Ohio, accounting firm, supervises a number of female secretaries. Les's route to the secretarial profession was a common one—through the military. For two years, he was clerk/secretary to an Army general on the front lines of the Viet Nam war. Upon his discharge from the Army, Les decided to utilize his secretarial skills in civilian life. He soon realized that another kind of conflict was going on back home in the States—the attempts by the women's movement to bring down the barriers against women in business. But the battle to end sex discrimination is far from over. For instance, according to U.S. government statistics, the average male secretary earns $27 more per week than his female counterpart. That comes to $1,404 extra per year, just for being a man.

32

In his experience, says Les, he's found that managers tend to give more credence to his opinions and ideas than to those of the female secretaries. "I've often found myself an unofficial spokesperson for the women in the office," he reports. His theory is that many businesspeople are unsure of how to treat a male secretary, so he usually commands more respect and is given more responsibility than a female secretary. Says Les: "That certainly punctures the myth that male secretaries are Caspar Milquetoasts who are easily bossed around."

Resentment of men who can earn more and receive more recognition is a reason often cited by female secretaries who would seek to exclude men from secretarial careers. Traditional male chauvinist thinking dictates that men are better fit for giving orders, women for taking them. One male secretary who has neatly overcome the problems of sex stereotyping is **Bill Meyers**, who enjoys an excellent working relationship with his boss, New York City publishing executive Joanne Zazzaro.

Like many male secretaries who work for women, he often has trouble convincing others that his boss, not he, is in charge in the office. "Sometimes telephone callers refuse to believe that she is the boss and I am the secretary," says Bill. "One time, we were setting up a room for a conference, and the worker couldn't believe that Ms. Zazzaro was making the decisions and that I was there merely to carry out the details. He made it clear through body language that he was looking to me, not her, for instructions. She and I have never discussed the incident, but I suppose that it bothered her, even though she lost no time in setting him straight about who was boss. Still, I couldn't help but think how difficult it must be for a woman executive to assert herself constantly so that she won't be overlooked."

The basis for Bill's easy relationship with his boss is deceptively simple: "I like and respect women," says Bill. "I don't mind 'taking orders' from a competent woman any more than I'd mind doing the bidding of a man who had knowledge and expertise in his field."

Bill, who completed two years of study at Pennsylvania State University, held a number of jobs before going to work at McGraw-Hill, Inc. He has worked variously as a secretary administering a job-placement program at the Women's House of Detention in New York City and as a "billet roller" in the mills of U.S. Steel in his hometown, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. "Believe it or not," says Bill, "of the two jobs, I much preferred working at the jail. The staff there—all female—is very enlightened, and the prisoners are treated in a humanitarian way." On the other hand, continues Bill, "The steel mill was a vision of hell." And worse than the heat and glare of the furnace was the sexist attitude of the men who worked there. Explains Bill: "Women don't rate too highly with men who are worried about their *macho* image. I couldn't relate to my coworkers' lack of sympathy for the goals of the women's movement. So I quit, and my wife and I moved to New York City, where we hoped that consciousness of women's issues would be better." He pauses. "I wonder what those guys back in the steel mill would say if they knew that I was a secretary?"

In this world of ever-changing values, no one could say for sure how that piece of news would go over. But it's safe to say that visions of Fred MacMurray and Caspar Milquetoast, and worse yet, of "Bruce the Interior Decorator," still flash into the minds of many at the mention of the term *male secretary*.

"I would counsel boys against taking secretarial courses at my school, because I doubt they would enjoy the work and I don't think anyone in this town would hire a male secretary." So said the director of one of the largest secretarial schools in Los Angeles, California, just a few weeks ago.

"I used to feel that way too," answered Jan Rabb, who runs another secretarial school in Dallas, Texas. "That was before I met Art Sellevold. Now, I'd say that we're probably entering a whole new cycle: First, the men dominated the secretarial field; now the women have it. In ten years, I reckon it won't matter which sex you are."

Art Sellevold, speaking for all the other men behind typewriters all over the country, put it rather well: "Everyone has the right to the job that he or she is willing to try for. Today, you can be anything you want." He ought to know. ●●●

photo by Barbara Groenteman

ACTIVITY (f)

QUALIFICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

1. PURPOSE

   (a) To expose students to the many different jobs available in a clerical occupation.

   (b) To show students that the qualifications for employment are not determined by sex.

2. PROCEDURE

   (a) The teacher should decide which occupation to focus on and discuss the many jobs available within the module. The teacher might make a list on the board like this:

Examples of Job Opportunities in Clerical Occupations:

CLERICAL OCCUPATIONS

[a]U.S.O.E.	[b]D.O.T.	POSITIONS
14.0901	203.362-010	Assistant Typist
14.0902	203.582-022	Typist
14.0399	203.582-034	Magnetic Tape Operator
14.0499	203.582-058	Transcribing Machine Operator
14.0803	206.137-010	Records Supervisor
14.0302	206.362-010	File Assistant
14.0301	207.682-010	Repographics Operator
14.0402	209.367-018	Correspondence Assistant
14.0303	209.562-010	General Office Assistant
14.0403	209.587-026	Mail Assistant
14.0399	216.482-014	Calculating/Adding Machine Operator
14.0504	222.387-026	Inventory Assistant
14.0504	222.387-058	Stock Assistant
14.0503	222.387-050	Shipping/Receiving Assistant

ACTIVITY (f)
(Cont'd)

[a]U.S.O.E.	[b]D.O.T.	POSITIONS
14.0401	235.662-022	Telephone Operator
14.0406	237.367-038	Receptionist
14.0405	239.567-010	Office Helper (Messenger)

A list of job opportunities specific to the course should be developed. In discussion or through research, students may learn what each of the jobs entail.

(b) When the list is fairly complete, distribute the student activity sheet and have the students decide independently which job or jobs this person is qualified for. Discuss after they have decided.

- How did you decide upon a position?
- What qualities do you see necessary for each job?
- What characteristics are not at all necessary for each job?
- Do you think this person is a male or a female? Why?
- If you learned that the person currently filling the position was a male, how would this influence your choice of position?
- In looking at the qualifications of the applicant, is this person over qualified for the job? Underqualified?
- Suppose you learn the sex of the applicant. Would you change your job offer? Why?
- What jobs are you interested in?
- How are you qualified for these jobs?

3. VARIATION OR FOLLOW-UP

Have students research any job in which they have an interest. From the research, have them list the requirements they feel are necessary for the job. Do they see this job as being exclusively for a male or a female? What requirements would limit the job to one sex? Has their perception of the job changed any after researching it? Have students share their results with the class. Use the "Financial Facts of Life" activity.

M. Smith has just graduated from high school and is applying for a job. In the interview and from the references, the personnel director finds that the candidate has the following qualities:

(a) A knowledge of the company through summer jobs.

(b) A good grade average in high school.

(c) A good attendance record in high school.

(d) Business and math skills.

(e) A pleasant personality.

(f) A desire to move up in the company.

(g) Recommendations that indicate the candidate is dependable and has an ability to get along with other people.

(h) A knowledge of safety precautions; an awareness of the importance of following instructions.

(i) A driver's license.

(j) Good health and neat appearance.

What jobs would you offer M. Smith?

A Riddle

While driving to the store, a young boy and father were involved in a serious car accident. The father was killed and the boy was injured and taken to a hospital. At the hospital, the boy was examined and an emergency operation was needed. The resident surgeon had scrubbed up, put on a gauze mask, and was waiting in the operating room when the boy was wheeled into surgery. The surgeon took one look at the boy and cried, "I can't operate. This is my son."

Who was the surgeon?

-- source unknown

Answer: The boy's mother.

Suggested Use: Opening of School, Open House, Recruitment

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OUR STUDENTS ARE EMPLOYED AS:

Administrative Assistant

Dispatcher

Computer Operator

Payroll Clerk

Bank Teller

Data Entry Clerk

Stenographer

Clerical Aides